



The Safe Use of Medicines

● ● ● A Workshop for Caregivers of Seniors



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News

- ➔ Health Canada publishes a guide to Age Friendly Rural and Remote Communities [Learn more](#)
- ➔ Ontario Community Support Association introduces an on-line search engine for care services [Learn more](#)
- ➔ Ottawa Citizen editorial recognizes the value of family caregivers [Learn more](#)
- ➔ Saint Elizabeth Healthcare and Foundation launch a new e-learning program for caregivers, @YourSide Caregiver Support [Learn more](#)

Off the Shelf

- ➔ Safe Medicines for Seniors, A Workshop for Caregivers:
 - Facilitator's Manual [View PDF](#)
 - A Guide for Caregivers [View PDF](#)
- ➔ December 2008 slide presentation at 2007 Home Care Summit: Safe Medicines for Parents and Children [View PDF](#)

Events of Interest

- ➔ 2nd National Community Health Nurses Conference – Toronto, ON, May 29-31, 2008. [Learn more](#)
- ➔ Canadian Pharmacists Association Annual National Conference – Victoria, BC, May 31-June 3, 2008. [Learn more](#)
- ➔ Canadian Home Care Association 2008 Home Care Summit – St. Andrews-by-the-Sea, NB, October 23-25, 2008. [Learn more](#)

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Safe Medicines for Seniors training is a hit (continued)

The *Safe Medicines for Seniors* workshop is intended to be offered with pharmacist in attendance and repeated testing has shown that the pharmacist is the key to the workshop's success. Almost without exception, trainers and trainees reserved their most positive comments for the pharmacists brought in as resources. They added value to the training by answering medication-specific questions and demonstrating "tools of the trade" like Dosettes, blister packs, and pill cutters. As one trainer explained, "... (the pharmacist's) contribution and participation...made my role as facilitator much easier and relieved any concerns I had about addressing medicine-related questions. I think that having a pharmacist participate...is an essential component."

As a measure of the success of the training-of-trainers roll-out, consider Elaine Fost of VON Cornerbrook, a facilitator who has already offered three *Safe Medicines for Seniors* workshops since she attended a training session in December. Her experience suggests that the *Safe Medicines for Seniors* workshops are addressing a clear need for education on safe medication use in our communities. In Elaine's words, "I think the information offered is very worthwhile and valuable to caregivers and families. The materials are well laid out and easy to present. I really enjoy facilitating the sessions."

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Safe Medicines for Seniors project finishes but the momentum continues (continued)

Since then, under the leadership of VON Canada, 105 people who work with family caregivers were trained to deliver the workshop. These highly motivated would-be facilitators are now ready to educate caregivers on safe medication use in more than 50 communities across Canada.

The project partners – Canadian Healthcare Association (CHA), Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA), and VON Canada – all agree about the importance of keeping the *Safe Medicines for Seniors* momentum going. So, steps are being taken to continue making the materials developed by the project accessible and available to family caregivers and those who work with them.

The project website lives on, at www.safemedicinesproject.ca, hosted by VON Canada. In addition to *Safe Medicines for Seniors* resources, you will find reports from project activities to discover whether parents caring for children with a chronic illness need or want education and support for safe medication use. Family caregivers and patient safety are key priorities for VON, which is building a dedicated caregiver web portal to be launched in June. Visit www.von.ca for information on the status of the portal, as well as other family caregiver and patient safety initiatives.

Another significant legacy of the project is the screening tool and resource guide developed under the leadership of the Canadian Pharmacists Association - *Safe Medicines for Seniors, A Guide for Caregivers*. The Association promotes safer medication use in many different ways. They will distribute hard copies of the guide in English and French upon request, while supplies last. If you are interested in obtaining copies contact: CPhA Customer Service 1-800-917-9489, or service@pharmacists.ca. If you are seeking further information on medication safety, visit CPhA's [Consumer/Patient Homepage](#).

